

Meteor Heraut

Published by the USAG Benelux

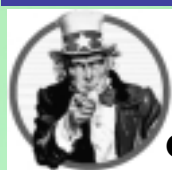
Volume 24, Number 10

Chièvres - Schinnen - Brussels

May 19, 2006

Around USAG Benelux

USAG Benelux



Call to Duty

Boots on the Ground

The 231st U.S. Army Birthday Ball is set for June 24, at the SHAPE Club. A reception will kickoff the gala at 5:30 p.m., followed by dinner and dancing. Soldiers of all ranks, retirees, Department of the Army Civilian employees, their family members and guests are invited to attend. Daycare service will be available at the SHAPE Child Development Center. For more information, contact your unit first sergeant or call DSN: 360-7533.

USAREUR, 7th Army Savusa named new CSM

USAREUR Public Affairs Office
HEIDELBERG, Germany - The new U.S. Army, Europe and Seventh Army command sergeant major, Command Sgt. Maj. Iuniasolua Tului Savusa, recently assumed his duties during a ceremony at Campbell Barracks.

Savusa's replaces Command Sgt. Maj. Michael L. Gravens, whose Army career concluded with a farewell ceremony at Campbell Barracks March 5.

A native of American Samoa, Savusa entered the Army in 1975. He has served on tours around the world from the demilitarized zone in Korea to the Sinai desert in Egypt, forts Bliss, Campbell and Polk in the United States, and his previous assignment as command sergeant major of the Southern European Task Force (Airborne), Vicenza, Italy. He has deployed to Iraq, Kuwait and Afghanistan.

USAREUR commanding general, Gen. David D. McKiernan, welcomed Savusa and his family
See SAVUSA, page 2



Savusa

IMA-Europe's NCO/Soldier of the Year Competition Best NCO belongs to the Benelux

By J.D. Hardesty
Meteor-Heraut Editor

The best noncommissioned officer in the Installation Management Agency-Europe belongs to U.S. Army Garrison Benelux.

Staff Sgt. Antonio Mariscal-Guzman, an NBC NCO for USAG Benelux's USAG Schinnen, was named IMA-Europe's NCO of the Year.

Mariscal-Guzman, a native of El Paso, Texas, worked through the first aid, camouflage and NBC warrior drills before the road march.

"I should know all of the NBC tasks, he told the tester at the beginning of the task," he said. "This is my job at USAG Schinnen."

Spec. Jose A. Pazmino, a personnel administration center clerk from USAG Darmstadt and representing USAG Heidelberg, was named Soldier of the Year.

The winners were announced Monday at a luncheon held at IMA-Europe's headquarters in Heidelberg, Germany.

The IMA-Europe NCO/Soldier of the



PHOTO: J.D. Hardesty

Four noncommissioned officers and five Soldiers competed in IMA-Europe's NCO and Soldier of the Year competition May 10-12 at the U.S. Army Garrison Benelux. Staff Sgt. Antonio Mariscal-Guzman, an NBC NCO at USAG Schinnen and Jose. A. Pazmino, a personnel administration center clerk, took top honors, (left to right) Mariscal-Guzman, Spec. Peter Suh and Staff Sgt. Andrew Kenny compete in the 20-kilometer road march.

Year competition included a physical fitness test, day and night land navigation, common task testing warrior drills, a 20-kilometer road march, a

written test, oral boards and a written essay over three days.

Mariscal-Guzman showed his com-
See NCO/Soldier of the Year, page 2

Engagement Skills Trainer opens

Computer simulation enhances Soldier training

By J.D. Hardesty
Meteor-Heraut Editor

The 7th Army Joint Multinational Training Command opened its Engagement Skills Trainer May 15 in a ribbon-

cutting and demonstration ceremony on Chièvres Air Base, at the U.S. Army Garrison Benelux Training Support Center.

The center, costing approximately \$200,000, provides Benelux Soldiers with marksmanship training and a supportive range. It can be used to simulate realistic training for Soldiers attending the Individual Deployment Training prior to deployment downrange.

The firing line has two M-16, two M-9 pistol and an M-249 squad automatic weapon system machine gun.

Additionally, according to Blaine Curtis, chief, training support office, Soldiers can qualify on this range simulator when no live fire line is available.

"This is the main training device used in Europe," he said. "The Benelux was scheduled to receive the Engagement Skills Trainer in fiscal year 2008, however we procured it early because of IDT class missions supporting NATO's downrange missions.

"Soldiers across the Benelux, as far a way as Rotterdam, The Netherlands, will be able to use the trainer," he said.



PHOTO: J.D. Hardesty

The 7th Army Joint Multinational Training Command opened its Engagement Skills Trainer May 15 on Chièvres Air Base at the U.S. Army Garrison Benelux Training Support Center.



Col. Dean A. Nowowiejski
USAG Benelux Commander

The Memorial Day weekend is upon us.

Please carefully consider this weekend as one, not for travel, but one to

Nowowiejski Notes

appropriately honor America's fallen who served in Europe, whether in the current conflict, or others dating back to 1917, now almost 90 years ago.

You have unique opportunities here in the Benelux to visit American Battle Monuments Commission cemeteries and participate in Memorial Day ceremonies.

Think of the scene from the movie "Saving Private Ryan," but add a few thousand people. It is something that your children will never forget.

There are five ABMC cemeteries in the Benelux. You can get background information on them at abmc.gov and ceremony information at www.usagbenelux.eur.army.mil.

Additional information is listed in

the article below for your convenience.

Here is the schedule of ceremonies:

Saturday May 27:

10 a.m. Ardennes, Belgium.

2 p.m. Luxembourg

4 p.m. Henri-Chapelle, Belgium.

America's war dead from breaking the West Wall, bomber and fighter crews, the Lorraine campaign, and the Battle of the Bulge lie in these cemeteries.

Sunday, 28 May 28:

Simultaneously at 3 p.m., Flanders Field, Belgium and Netherlands.

Flanders Field is the only World War I cemetery in Belgium, although there are two other WWI memorials that you can locate on the ABMC web

site.

The Netherlands American Cemetery holds the largest number of war dead in the Benelux.

Finally, at the Mardasson Monument in Bastogne on Memorial Day Monday, May 29 at 2:30 p.m. the six ceremonies for the weekend will conclude.

I doubt there is a more American-friendly town in Belgium than Bastogne, although there are many where Americans are deeply honored. I have omitted a whole line of ABMC monuments and cemeteries in Northern France that should not be forgotten.

What will you and your family do to honor the purpose of Memorial Day? When is the next time in your life you will be so close to America's fallen lying on foreign soil?

Please take the opportunity.

Memorial Day Celebrations U.S. Forces fallen, but not forgotten

Ardennes Cemetery at Neuville-en-Condroz

Ceremony: May 27 at 10 a.m.

The Ardennes cemetery is the last resting place for 5,329 American military, many of whom died in the Battle of the Bulge.

Along the outside of the memorial, inscribed on granite slabs, are the names of 462 American Missing who gave their lives in the service of their country, but whose remains were never recovered or identified.

Soldiers of the U.S. Army Garrison Benelux and tenant units will be participating.

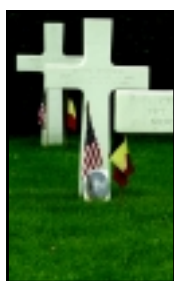
Luxembourg American Cemetery

Ceremony: May 27 at 2 p.m.

The World War II Luxembourg American Cemetery and Memorial lies just within the limits of Luxembourg City and is located in a beautiful wooded area.

The names of 371 Americans who gave their lives in the service of their country and lie in unknown graves are inscribed on the pythons.

The city of Luxembourg served as headquarters for General George S. Patton's U.S. Third Army. General Patton is buried at the Luxembourg American Cemetery.



Sloping downhill from the memorial is the burial area containing 5,076 American dead, many of whom gave their lives in the "Battle of the Bulge" and in the advance to the Rhine River.

Henri-Chapelle American Cemetery

Ceremony: May 27 at 4 p.m.

The World War II Henri-Chapelle American Cemetery is the final resting place for 7,992 American military dead, most of whom gave their lives during the advance of the American Armed Forces into Germany during World War II.

On the rectangular piers of the colonnade are inscribed the names of 450 Americans who gave their lives in the service of their country but whose remains were never recovered or identified. Soldiers of the USAG Benelux and tenant units will be participating.

Flanders Field Cemetery at Waregem

Ceremony: May 28 at 3 p.m.

At this peaceful location rest 368 American military, most of whom gave their lives in liberating Belgium in World War I.

On the chapel's side walls are inscribed the names of 43 of the missing in action who gave their lives in the service of their country, but whose remains were never recovered or identified.

Soldiers of the USAG Benelux and tenant units will be participating.

Netherlands American cemetery at Margraten

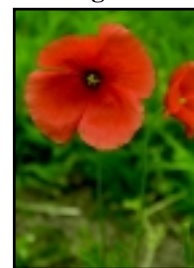
Ceremony: May 28 at 3 p.m.

The World War II Netherlands American Cemetery and Memorial is the only cemetery in The Netherlands and is located near the city of Maastricht.

The walls on either side of the Court of Honor contain the names of 1,723 American missing who gave their lives in the service of their country and who rest in unknown graves. Beyond the chapel rest 8,301 American dead, most of whom lost their lives nearby.

Soldiers of the USAG Schinnen will be participating in the Memorial Day ceremony.

(PHOTOS: File)



Savusa...Continued from page 1

in a speech during the ceremony.

After the general's remarks, Savusa took the microphone. He spoke briefly in the Samoan language, delivering what he described as thanks to his elders, a Samoan tradition for important occasions.

Savusa then switched to English, and said, "I will start by thanking my wife Mareta, and our four wonderful children ... I wouldn't be here today without you."

He also thanked his parents, who were unable to attend the ceremony.

"Long before I signed the dotted line, they instilled in me ... values like courage, integ-

riety, service before self," he said. "They are proud Samoans, and I hope they are proud of my career in the Army and that I honor them with that. Because wherever you are from, honoring your family is job one."

Savusa continued, "General McKiernan, I express my sincere appreciation for the confidence you have in me. As your senior enlisted leader and advisor, I consider this job one of the most important jobs in the Army, and it is an honor for me to assume it. I am eager to take the challenge."

Savusa then discussed the Soldiers of U.S. Army, Europe.

"They are here because of

the promise America made to Europe, to uphold freedom, democracy and the rule of law ... because of the sacrifice of ordinary Soldiers, America has kept its commitment. Today, Soldiers in Europe are also committed in other areas of the world, fighting the war on terror," he said.

"I have had the privilege and honor to serve side-by-side with these Soldiers ... in both Afghanistan and Iraq," Savusa said. "But while our commitment has not wavered here in Europe, we certainly recognize that the nature of our mission has changed. We are part of the greatest force transformation in the history of our ser-

vice. We are transforming an army. This transformation requires rebasing, repositioning, reassignment. But this also requires great leadership on the part of every leader at every level. And during my tenure here in Europe, noncommissioned officers are going to hear a lot about this."

Savusa continued, "I will remind noncommissioned officers that they are leading volunteers, and our Soldiers are all Soldiers of democracy, who joined of their own free will. Who stay by their own choice. That is a special kind of Soldier, and it takes a special kind of noncommissioned officer to lead them and inspire them."

He concluded, "Now, it is time to go back to work. God bless America, God bless our Army that serves her, God bless our Soldiers in harm's way, God bless each and every one of you. Any mission, anywhere."

Advertisement

NCO/Soldier of the Year...Continued from page 1

petitiveness during the road march. While finishing fourth in one of the hottest, humid afternoons in Belgium this year, he forged ahead, remained focused - step by step - until he crossed the finish line. He required an "IV" from the medic on standby to rehydrate.

Pazmino, who calls Mountain View, Calif., home, explained "I studied everywhere I went. I kept the study guides with me constantly."

Explaining the difficulty of the competition, Pazmino said, "Every task had difficulty and you can't afford to mess up on anything... the road march, the boards, you just can't afford to mess up."

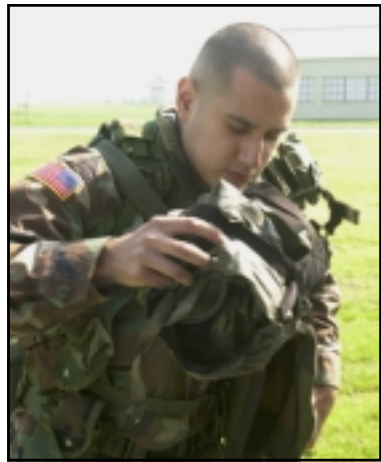


PHOTO: J.D. Hardesty

Spec. Jose A. Pazmino, representing USAG Darmstadt, is tested on NBC warrior drills during the IMA-Europe Soldier of the Year competition. Pazmino beat four other Soldiers to win the IMA-Europe Soldier of the Year.

onia, explained, "It was tough to stay motivated during the road march," which he completed in just over three hours. "It was a tough competition and you had to bring your 'A' game in everything you do."

Some Soldiers studied several hours a day while others trained whenever they could, however, their motivation, direction and purpose "had to be a constant gut-check as you put yourself through the limit," several of them said as they described their train-up to compete.

Sgt. Michael E. Kleiber, a USAG Stuttgart administrative NCO who calls Lubbock, Texas home, effortlessly worked his way through his warrior task of applying first aid without a hitch but was evidently nervous. As he called for a medical evacuation as an additional task, his hands visibly shook as he help his right hand up next to his ear with his thumb and little finger extended to simulate a radio telephone.

"You just hope your training can carry you through," he said.

Staff Sgt. Andrew Kenny, a native of Blacksburg, Va.,

who works in the Directorate of Public Works at USAG Hohenfels and was representing USAG Grafenwoehr, road marched with Spec. Peter Suh, an administrative specialist also from Hohenfels and representing Grafenwoehr, to mentor his fellow Soldier.

"Walking on the concrete was tough and my feet wouldn't let be walk any faster," Kenny said of the road march. "With my feet feeling like they were on fire and wearing kevlar that baked me like an oven, I decided to walk with my fellow Hohenfels Soldier to make sure we both finished the road march."

The competition was open to all IMA-Europe Soldiers. Six of IMA-Europe's seven major garrisons sent Soldiers to compete. USAG Vincenzo was not represented.

IMA-Europe Command Sgt. Maj. Teresa King, said, "This is my third year to preside over the IMA-Europe NCO/Soldier of the Year competition. All three years we have had great Soldiers and great competition."

The competition ensures IMA Soldiers have maintained their training.

King commented there is an added benefit to competing for NCO and Soldier of the year boards as the "competition identifies individual strengths and weaknesses to help them prepare for promotion boards."

"Sometimes Soldiers don't feel ready for this type of competition," King said. "It's up to senior leaders to make sure Soldiers are prepared at the installation level so when they do compete, they will be of the highest caliber."

Working under pressure, hardship and stress while competing amongst their peers "let's us see what they are made of," King said.

The winners will represent IMA's European Region at IMA's Military District of Washington in June.

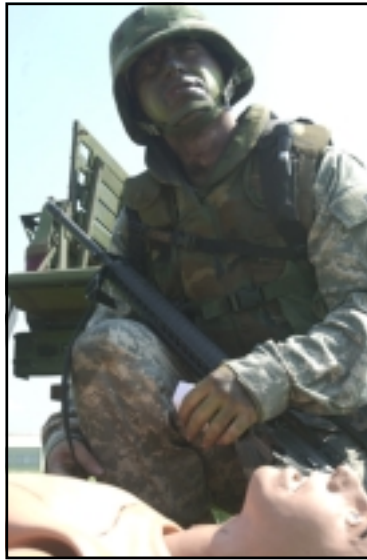


PHOTO: J.D. Hardesty

Staff Sgt. Antonio Mariscal-Guzman, from USAG Schinnen, tests his first aid warrior drills during the IMA-Europe NCO of the Year competition. The USAG Benelux Soldier was named the IMA-Europe NCO of the Year.

About the

Meteor-Heraut

The *Meteor-Heraut* is an authorized unofficial civilian enterprise newspaper published for the U.S. Army under AR 360-1 for U.S. military personnel in the Benelux nations under exclusive agreement between the USAG Benelux and AdvantiPro GmbH of Kaiserslautern, Germany, a private firm in no way connected with the Department of the Army or the Department of Defense. Editorial content is provided by public affairs offices of the USAG Benelux, USAG Schinnen and USAG Brussels. Opinions expressed are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by the U.S. government, Department of Defense, Department of the Army or the USAG Benelux. Appearance of advertising in this publication, including inserts or supplements, does not constitute endorsement by the Department of the Defense, Department of the Army, USAG Benelux or AdvantiPro GmbH of the products or services advertised.

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- We reserve the right to edit all material for style, to fit available space, to resolve libel, safety or force protection issues and to correct grammar.
- Submit articles in plain text and separate photographic files, but publication depends upon the judgment of the editor.
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Deadline

Copy and photographs are due by noon 11 calendar days before publication date.

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Benelux Finance's check cashing policy changes

The Benelux Finance Office changed its check cashing policy, effective May 10. Personal checks for discretionary funds may not exceed \$745.00 per day for authorized active duty military and DOD employees assigned to the Benelux Region.

Military retirees, residing in the Benelux may cash up to \$745.00 per week. Checks written for housing costs such as rent, utilities and alarm system

installation, may exceed this limit with proof of expense.

Customers must bring a copy of their lease or regular utility bill to the finance office, which can also be utilized for future authorizations.

Changes to these amounts or one time payments, can be authorized with the presentation of additional bills at the disbursing windows.

The cashing of two party checks, in the name of the sponsor, will still be

authorized up to \$745.00 per check. Other negotiable instruments, such as treasury checks, money orders, cashiers checks, traveler's checks and insurance company checks will be honored as well. This policy will be implemented throughout the Benelux, at the SHAPE, Brussels and Brunssum finance offices.



Meteor-Heraut Deadline and Publication Dates

Copy is due at noon

Deadline	Print Date	Deadline	Print Date	Deadline	Print Date	Deadline	Print Date
May 22	June 2	July 3	July 14	July 31	Aug. 11	Aug. 28	Sept. 8
June 12	June 23	July 17	July 28	Aug 14	Aug. 25	Sept. 11	Sept. 22



Chièvres Garrison...serving SHAPE/Chièvres communities

Community Notes

Chièvres/SHAPE hosts Town Hall meeting

Chièvres Garrison and the U.S. Army Garrison Benelux staff will host its quarterly Town Hall meeting for the Chièvres/SHAPE community May 24 at 6:30 p.m. at Hotel Maisières. Everyone in the community is invited to attend.

When: May 24, 6:30 p.m.
Where: Hotel Maisières

Army Emergency Relief Fundraising Campaign

Soldiers and their families can help others in need during Army Emergency Relief's fundraising campaign. Additional information will be available May 25 as AER sets up information tables at the Chièvres Post Exchange and the Commissary. The campaign ends May 31. For additional information in the Chièvres Garrison, call 361-5154.

Annual Job Fair

The Army Community Services will host its annual Job Fair May 23 from 1-5 p.m. in the Banquet room at Hotel Le Maisières. The Job Fair is open to anyone within the Chièvres Garrison footprint. More than 30 community employers will be represented at the Job Fair.

Northern Law Center Poster, Essay Contest

Teaching elementary school children took a legal twist this month as SHAPE Elementary School youth participated in the Northern Law Center's Law Day.

Winners:

Poster Contest

1st Place: Joey Acosta
2nd Place: Stephanie Bishop
3rd Place: Erika Albaityte
Honorable Mention: Marissa Mackson

Essay Contest

1st Place: Alexa Erdogan
2nd Place: Joshua Julien
3rd Place: Emin Mammador
Honorable Mention: Ilvas and Tair Ilyasov



PHOTO: J.D. Hardesty

Capt. Matt Kopetski, an attorney with the Northern Law Office on SHAPE, sits with the winners of the Law Day poster and essay contest at SHAPE Elementary School.

International community makes wishes come true SHAPE/Chièvres open wallets, gait for Make-A-Wish children

By J.D. Hardesty

Meteor-Heraut Editor



PHOTO: J.D. Hardesty

Make-A-Wish participants accumulated more than 7,700 laps on the 400-meter track and raised an estimated \$80,000 for the foundation.

The entire community within the Chièvres Garrison footprint opened their gait and stretched their stride for 24 consecutive hours to raise more than \$80,000 for the Make-A-Wish foundation May 12 and 13.

Nearly 50 teams from SHAPE member nations spent their Thursday night and Friday afternoon taking turns running or walking around the SHAPE 400-meter track.

Runners, walkers, parents and youth from Bulgaria, Lithuania, Belgium, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Britain, Spain Canada and Greece participated with members of Chièvres Garrison, 39th Signal, 309th Airlift Squadron and U.S. Army NATO.

An estimated 1,600 people attended the event with participants accumulating more than 7,700 laps on the track. Two terminally ill children's wishes; one to swim with dolphins and the other to attend a Los Angeles Lakers game, will be granted thanks to the SHAPE/Chièvres international community.

Garrison gets taste of Hawaiian Islands

By J.D. Hardesty

Meteor-Heraut Editor

The Chièvres Garrison community received a little taste from the Hawaiian Islands - a Luau show - May 12, in recognition of Asian Pacific Heritage Month at the SHAPE Club.

A Polynesian performing troupe from Honolulu entertained over 100 guests with traditional music, dancing and a little fire-eating drama, not to mention a four-course authentic dinner as part of the cultural celebration.

"We enjoy playing for America's military," said Lance Kalahiki, one of five musicians who sing traditional songs from his native Hawaii. "We are especially honored to be invited to perform for the troops and do what we can to help boost the morale of our men and women serving overseas."

The group also sings traditional folk songs from other Pacific islands such as Fiji and Guam.



PHOTO: J.D. Hardesty

Lance Malahiki, a member of Ma'ohi Nui, sings and plays the ukulele during the Armed Forces Entertainment Luau show in support of Asian Pacific Heritage Month.

Ma'ohi Nui, a group of 13 performers touring Europe in support of a six-stop concert for Armed Forces Entertainment, brought eight dancers and five musicians to entertain SHAPE's international community.

The hour and 15 minute show incorporates Polynesian cultural dances from Tahiti, Hawaii, Samoa, Tonga and New Zealand and includes live traditional music, fire dances and audience participation as the elaborately costumed Ma'ohi Nui dance troupe moves to the beat of thunderous drums, conch shells and traditional Polynesian music.

Ma'ohi Nui's last two stops during this year's tour will be in England.

This year's tour marks the third consecutive year the Honolulu-based Polynesian performers have performed for Armed Forces Entertainment, but their first European tour.

They played to U.S. Forces in Japan and Singapore during their first two Armed Forces Entertainment tours.



PHOTO: Cis Spook

From left to right, the community Color Guard, Marcel D'Haese, Chairman of the 5th Fusiliers Battalion, Marc Darville, Alderman of the City of Mons, Chièvres Garrison Commander Lt. Col. John G. Romero and members of the 5th Fusiliers Battalion laid a wreath at the 1st Infantry Division monument at Mons on May 8. The 5th Fusiliers Battalion composed of Belgian volunteers, joined the 23rd Tanks Group of the First U.S. Army in the Ardennes in December 1944. These Belgian volunteers participated in the Battle of the Bulge and mainly in the battles of Stavelot, Malmedy and Bastogne. In March 1945, they crossed the Rhine River and pushed back German regiments. On May 8, 1945, they were positioned along the Werra River, southeast of Kassel, where the battalion joined forces with the Russian troops who were stationed on the other side of the river.

USAG Schinnen...serving the tri-border community

Tri-border volunteers recognized

By LaDonna Davis

Schinnen Public Affairs Office

Nearly 300 volunteers from the tri-border community area were recognized for their service, time and support during the 2006 Annual Volunteer Recognition Ceremony held at USAG Schinnen on May 4.

By giving time and support to various organizations and activities in the community, volunteers were able to save the garrison and its supported units more than \$300,000 during the 2005 calendar year.

"It's the volunteers in this community that do things for activities offered in the community," said Sylvia Bowron, the volunteer corps coordinator. "It's important to recognize volunteers and recognizing that they are contributing to the community and to thank them for their contributions cause we couldn't do it without them."

Each volunteer who is registered with the Army volunteer corps coordinator and gave one or more hours of their time was honored during the ceremony. Volunteers could also be nominated by colleagues, co-workers and supervisors for a chance to win volunteer of the year awards.

"It's been a pleasure being recognized for this award and whether I get recognized or not, I feel great helping the kids out and giving of my time," said Tech. Sgt. Terrance Barbary, who was awarded the Military Volunteer of the Year award for coaching and mentoring young athletes.

"I recommend volunteering for ev-



PHOTO: LaDonna Davis

(Left to right) Sylvia Bowron, USAG Schinnen Command Sgt. Maj. Ralph Rusch and Garrison Commander Lt. Col. Rick Richardson hold up a check displaying the number of dollars volunteers helped save the community during this year's volunteer recognition ceremony May 4.

*Tri-Border volunteer of the year winners***Sponsor of the Year:** Lt. Col James Sparks**Civilian Volunteer of the Year:** Karl Maurer**Youth Volunteer of the Year:** Dustin Broadwater**Military Volunteer of the Year:** Tech. Sgt. Terrance Barbary**Family member volunteer of the Year:** Gerald Peet**Volunteer Family of the Year:** The Tornabell Family

erybody. There are plenty of opportunities out there and even if you only do a little bit, it goes a long way," said Lt. Col. James Sparks, the Sponsor of the Year winner.

Volunteers in the tri-border commu-

nity gave more than 18,000 hours of their time volunteering.

"It's volunteers that make the community grow and a home away from home. Our volunteers make this community successful," said Bowron.

Schinnen celebrates Cinco de Mayo

Members of the Tri-border community celebrated Cinco de Mayo with pulsating, finger snapping and toe tapping beats from Latin Connection, a band playing as part of an USO tour May 5 at USAG Schinnen's sports center.

This marks the California-based band first USO tour together, though two members, keyboardist Cesar Banitez and guitarist Joe Calderon, have performed separately in previous tours.

After performing in another USO tour in Belgium, Banitez says that the Soldiers made him feel so good he just wanted to continue performing. It was from that desire that he put together a group of performers with energy, love for their country and Mexican heritage to form the band, Latin Connection.

"I just put a band together and we do our repertoire, like Latin top 40, and our own stuff in our own style and that's where we got the Latin Connection from. So we just combine different rhythms, and we have fun."

Other members of the newly-formed band include base player Gustavo Eraso, keyboardist Cesar Banitez, drummer Ruben Ordiano, lead vocalist Marian Neblina and guitarist Joe Calderon.

Though the group specializes in rhythm and song playing, throughout the concert the band's beat, along with lead singer,



PHOTO: LaDonna Davis

The band, Latin Connection, gives members of the Schinnen community a reason to dance and have fun on Cinco de Mayo with their Latin beats and catchy rhythms.

Neblina's power or persuasion had the audience out of their seats and dancing, something Calderon calls, "food for feet."

"This is their way of showing America support. We just want to show support for our troops and do our part," said Neblina.

"Whatever we can do to give our troops five minutes or an hour from breaking from their reality then our work is done, and that's the reason we are here," said Eraso. "It's the most wonderful blessing. Not only for them but for all of us, to see their faces of gratitude, there's no better feeling."

U.S. Forces gear-up for Nijmegen March

By LaDonna Davis

Schinnen Public Affairs Office

More than 300 U.S. service members stationed across Europe and stateside are planning to participate in this year's annual Nijmegen March to be held July 18-21 in Nijmegen, The Netherlands.

This year's event, which is being held from July 18-21, marks the 90th anniversary of the four-day march. Additionally, the Nijmegen March is the world's biggest walking event, and is also one of the world's largest sporting events open to civilian and military marchers. Nearly 49,000 participants have registered for this year's march, 5,000 of which are military.

The U.S. Army Garrison Benelux's three garrisons have built a team of 12 marchers who will walk the 40 kilometers (25 miles) per day with 22 pound ruck sacks for all four days.

The Benelux team has been intensely training for this grueling march for six to eight hours a week since January.

"We've marched about 130 miles in preparation for the Nijmegen, I don't think we're where we need to be yet, but we're getting close," said 2nd Lt. Henry Aguigui, operations officer for USAG Schinnen and a member of this year's Benelux marching team. "Our goal is for everyone on the team to finish the march as a team."

"Managing more than 300 service members coming from all different locations is a difficult task," said Capt. Jon Beck, the U.S. liaison support team commander for the 2005 Nijmegen March. "The support Schinnen garrison provides is essential for U.S. military teams to succeed."



PHOTO: File

U.S. Soldiers march during the 2005 Nijmegen March.



USAG Brussels...serving the tri-mission community

USAG Brussels Soldier deploys downrange

By Thad Moyseowicz

USAG Brussels Public Affairs Officer

The U.S. Army is currently at war in two countries within the U.S. Central Command's (CENTCOM) theater of operations.

Battling on two fronts, even small garrisons such as U.S. Army Garrison Brussels are making contributing directly to war-fighting operations at the "tip of the spear."

"We're a pretty lean and mean Army organization," says Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment 1st Sgt. Clarke Williams. "Because we are so small, it's particularly crucial that each one of our Soldiers pull his or her share of our mission, which is to support the U.S. footprint that works here at NATO Headquarters in support of U.S. national security."

Brussels Garrison bid farewell to Staff Sgt. Anthony Maddox April 28th as he deployed with CENTCOM for 180 to 360 days.

Maddox, who hails from Mobile, Ala., has been with the garrison since November of 2003.

Prior to joining the Army, he had completed an enlistment in the Navy.

"Sergeant Maddox was originally assigned as one of our military chauffeurs," explains Williams. Brussels receives a steady stream of high-ranking U.S. visitors who come to do business at NATO and



PHOTO: Thad Moyseowicz

Staff Sgt. Anthony Maddox is joined by wife, Madina, prior to boarding his deployment flight downrange in support of CENTCOM.

Maddox abilities quickly led to his being selected as a chauffeur for high-profile missions involving dignitaries from the White House, Pentagon and State

Department.

His superb performance led to his rapid promotion to staff sergeant in the course of two years.

Along with the promotions came increased responsibility and an appointment as HHD's unit training noncommissioned officer and safety officer.

"We learned a few months ago about the need downrange for Soldiers with Maddox's MOS," says Williams. Informed of the possibility that deployment might be on the horizon, Maddox, recalls Williams, answered immediately, "Not a problem, first sergeant. When do I leave?"

Maddox was engaged. He and his Belgian fiancé, Madina, had planned a June wedding, but his imminent deployment accelerated those plans.

The Maddoxes were wed on April 18th, and he departed for Fort Benning, Ga.'s Combined Readiness Center (CRC) immediately after his farewell ceremony. While at the CRC, Maddox will be brought up to the requisite training standard required in a war zone, and will then be assigned "downrange."

"All of us in Brussels are proud of Maddox," says Williams. "He's a super Soldier, and I know he'll do us proud."

Brussels honors volunteer of the year

By Isabelle Gillet

USAG Brussels PAO

The continuous support of dedicated volunteers is crucial to the success of many of the programs run by the U.S. Army Garrison Brussels.

In acknowledgment of that fact, the Garrison's Army Community Service (ACS) recognize all who had been lending a hand in the various ACS-sponsored events during the past year.

Judith Nieusma was named ACS's Volunteer of the Year for her previous support of the Brussels Community Information Fairs and was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation and an engraved pewter plate. The announcement of her selection was followed by a long round of applause from all attendees.

It's worth describing some of the details of Nieusma's work that led to her selection.

The Community Information Fair is an acclaimed annual event in Brussels geared toward newcomers and long-term residents alike. Over 100 organizations, each with different (and changing) needs are represented.

A floor plan is required each year as part of this major event preparation. Nieusma has excelled in taking on this complicated task, which she has executed with skill and tact.

Her acknowledged as a veritable "electrical mechanical engineer" have taken floor planning to a professional level that will be difficult to sustain when she departs.

The development of a comprehensive floor plan, clear to everyone, for an event taking place in a small Garrison compound within six different areas and three different buildings demands talent, patience and the willingness to put in countless hours of work.

Nieusma had to juggle numerous technical requirements.

She sketched out venues within the Garrison's buildings using her personal software, measured rooms, tables, chairs, counted and recounted participants, grouped organizations by subject, identified spots with or without display walls, computer plugs, electricity plugs, and countless more.

She always met all deadlines with a smile, while helping with all the other aspects of the preparation and execution of the annual information fair.

From the above description, one could infer that Brussels' ACS had the good fortune to acquire a professional event planner.

"We've been extremely fortunate in having a volunteer of Judy's caliber," says Brussels ACS Relocation Program Manager Cathy Blumenthal. "She's really incredible. Not only does she do a professional quality job with the floor planning, but she's intimately involved with the execution."

Says Blumenthal, "This mother of five children knows how to straighten out differences, how to be firm while simultaneously keeping people reasonably happy, and how to say 'no'"



PHOTO: Courtesy USAG Brussels

Brussels Army Community Services Director Heather Reekie (left) presents Judith Nieusma with the ACS Volunteer of the Year award.

when an item on exhibitors' wish lists cannot be fulfilled. For the last three years she has used all her tact and extensive skills to develop floor plans that were equally praised by organization representatives, leadership, and attendees."

Blumenthal, who is responsible for orchestrating the Brussels information fairs, likes to say of Nieusma that she is "like a painter who first visions, than paints, and finally exhibits a piece of

art. Except that painters sometimes have to wait until they are gone to be recognized."

Brussels ACS is proud to have recognized its number one volunteer while she is still in Brussels. Paraphrasing Astronaut Neil Armstrong, Blumenthal concluded, "150-plus hours of volunteering were a small step out of the thousands of hours donated in this community in 2006, but a giant leap for ACS."



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